

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 KINGST 04726 01 OF 02 132217Z
ACTION ARA-14

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FM AMEMBASSY KINGSTON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1747
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S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 KINGSTON 4726

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: XA, CU, UR, MPOL
SUBJECT: LA REACTION TO SOVIET AND CUBAN ROLE IN AFRICA

REF: STATE 148740

1. SUMMARY. THE JAMAICA GOVERNMENT OF PRIME MINISTER
MANLEY TAKE THEIR CUE ON AFRICAN POLICY FROM THE OAU AND
SEE THE SOVIETS AND CUBANS THERE AS BASTIONS OF DEFENSE AGAINST
MINORITY RACIST GOVERNMENTS AND DEFENDERS OF THE
SACRED PRINCIPLE OF TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY. WHILE CONCERNED
ABOUT THE GROWING EXTENT OF SUCH INVOLVEMENT, THERE ARE NO
INDICATIONS THAT MANLEY AND CO. ARE WAVERING IN THEIR
SUPPORT FOR CUBA AND FIDEL CASTRO. THEY MAY DEPLORE THE
VIOLENCE, THE FOREIGN INTERVENTION AND THE GROWING EAST-WEST
CONFRONTATION BUT THEY FEEL THE U.S. AND ITS EUROPEAN ALLIES
HAVE LEFT THEM NO OPTION BUT THE CUBANS.

IF THE U.S. AND ITS ALLIES WOULD PUT THEIR FULL
WEIGHT BEHIND THE LIBERATION STRUGGLE, THEY WOULD GAIN
JAMAICAN SUPPORT. CONSIDERATION FOR THE IMPORTANCE
OF RELATIONS WITH THE U.S. HAS PREVENTED JAMAICAN
SUPPORT FOR THE CUBANS FROM BEING MORE VOCAL.

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SECRET

PAGE 02 KINGST 04726 01 OF 02 132217Z

DOMESTIC REALITIES HERE- A POPULATION 90 PERCENT OF AFRICAN
ORIGIN - AND THE RULING PARTY'S IDEOLOGY ARE THE OTHER
CRITICAL FACTORS IN DETERMINING THE
GOVERNMENT'S PERCEPTION OF ITS INTEREST IN AFRICA
AND THE CUBAN ROLE THERE. END SUMMARY.

2. WE HAVE HAD NO REACTION FROM HIGH-LEVEL GOVERNMENT

LEADERS ON THE SOVIET-CUBAN ROLE IN AFRICA SINCE PRIME MINISTER MANLEY'S COMMENT TO THE AMBASSADOR IN APRIL THAT HE STILL ADMIRES CASTRO AND CONSIDERS HIM A CLOSE FRIEND BUT "WAS WAVERING SOMEWHAT" OVER THE EXPANDING CUBAN ROLE IN AFRICA (KINGSTON 8562). THE PRESS ON JUNE 2 REPORTED THAT PRIME MINISTER MANLEY AND THE NEW SOVIET AMBASSADOR DISCUSSED AFRICA AMONG OTHER ISSUES ON THE PREVIOUS DAY (KINGSTON 4712). WE SHALL TRY TO GET AN UPDATE BEFORE DEADLINE NOTED REFTEL.

3. IT WOULD BE ACCURATE TO SAY THAT IN ANGOLA THE JAMAICAN GOVERNMENT SEES THE CUBANS AND THEIR SOVIET MENTORS AS BASTIONS OF DEFENSE AGAINST SOUTH AFRICA AND WHAT THEY BELIEVE ARE THE SOUTH AFRICAN-SUPPORTED SAVIMBI GUERRILLAS. WHILE REGRETTING THE NECESSITY FOR FOREIGN INTERVENTION, PRIME MINISTER MANLEY HAS MADE IT CLEAR THAT HE SEES THE CUBAN ROLE IN THIS CONTEXT AS CONSTRUCTIVE. BETWEEN CUBA AND SOUTH AFRICA THERE IS NO CHOICE, ONLY A FOREGONE CONCLUSION.

4. IN ETHIOPIA THE CUBANS AND SOVIETS ARE SEEN AS THE DEFENDERS OF THE PRINCIPLE OF TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY. THAT THE SOVIETS WERE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE VIOLATION OF THAT PRINCIPLE IN ARMING THE SOMALIS FOR THEIR INVASION IS CONSIDERED IRRELEVANT IN VIEW OF SOMALIA'S SUBSEQUENT BEHAVIOR. THE SUBTLETIES AND
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 KINGST 04726 01 OF 02 132217Z

HISTORICAL CONTEXT OF THE ERITREAN QUESTION HAVE PROBABLY NOT BEEN STUDIED SERIOUSLY HERE.

5. ZIMBABWE, NAMIBIA AND SOUTH AFRICA ARE ALL AREAS WHERE THE CUBANS AND THE SOVIETS ARE PERCEIVED TO BE ON THE RIGHT SIDE AND THE U.S. ON THE WRONG SIDE. OUR EFFORTS TO NEGOTIATE A PEACEFUL TRANSITION TO MAJORITY RULE IN ZIMBABWE AND NAMIBIA ARE RESPECTED BUT THE WARS GO ON. PEACEFUL SOLUTIONS WHILE DESIRABLE SEEM TO BE AN UNREALISTIC AND EMOTIONAL RESPONSE BASED ON WISHFUL THINKING. COMPROMISES AND CONCESSIONS BY IAN SMITH AND JOHN VORSTER ARE VIEWED AS TACTICAL DODGES. THEREFORE, THE PRESSURE OF THE GUERRILLA MOVEMENTS IS THE ONLY WAY FOR THE MAJORITY TO ACHIEVE A SAY IN THEIR OWN AFFAIRS. THE U.S. AND THE WEST COULD HELP BUT DO NOT WHILE THE SOVIETS AND THE CUBANS DO. IT'S THE SAME STORY AS IN THE DAYS OF THE PORTUGUESE ROLE IN AFRICA, THE CUBANS AND SOVIETS AID THE LIBERATION MOVEMENTS WHILE THE U.S. AND THE EUROPEANS PLAY FOR TIME. THUS, THE WEST GIVES AFRICA AND JAMAICA NO OPTION THAT COULD GAIN FAVOR AND SUPPORT. THE WAR IS NOT BETWEEN THE NATO POWERS AND THE CUBANS/SOVIETS BUT BETWEEN THE BLACK

MASSES AND THE MINORITY OF JAMAICANS
IDENTIFY COMPLETELY WITH THE AFRICAN MAJORITY.

6. JAMAICA UNDER THE MANLEY GOVERNMENT TAKES ITS CUE
ON AFRICAN ISSUES FROM THE MAJORITY OAU POSITION.
NYERERE AND KAUNDA, AS WELL AS THE CUBANS, ARE LISTENED
TO, EVEN THOUGH THEY DO NOT LIKE THE IDEA OF THE CUBANS
AND THE SOVIETS THROWING THEIR MILITARY POWER ABOUT IN
AFRICA, THE GOJ SUPPORTS THE OAU AND THE MORE MILITANT
OAU MEMBER STATES AND SHARES THEIR PERCEPTIONS OF THE
CUBAN AND SOVIET ROLES TODAY. THEIR PRESCRIPTION FOR
HANDLING THE PROBLEMS OF SOUTHERN AFRICA WOULD BE FOR THE
U.S. AND OTHERS TO LEND THEIR FULL WEIGHT AGAINST THE
MINORITY RACIST REGIMES.

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 04 KINGST 04726 01 OF 02 132217Z

7. IT WOULD BE IMPRUDENT, BASED ON OUR LIMITED KNOWLEDGE,
TO DO MORE THAN HAZARD A GUESS AT THE GOJ'S VIEWS
OF THE RECENT INVASION OF SHABI FROM ANGOLA. THEY
PROBABLY BELIEVE THE RECENT ASSERTION OF PM DO NASCIMENTO
THAT THE CUBANS WERE NOT INVOLVED (KINGSTON 4540).
FONMIN PATTERSON IN DISCUSSING THE RECENT VISIT OF
THE ANGOLAN PM TO KINGSTON WITH AN EMBOFF SAID HE WAS NOT

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PAGE 01 KINGST 04726 02 OF 02 150237Z
ACTION ARA-14

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S E C R E T SECTION 2 OF 2 KINGSTON 4726

AT ALL ANNOYED WITH DO NASCIMENTO'S FAILURE TO GIVE MUCH NOTICE OF HIS ARRIVAL BECAUSE AFTER ALL, "HE IS AT HOME HERE." WHEN CONFRONTED WITH CONFLICTING INTERPRETATIONS OF AFRICAN DEVELOPMENTS FROM THE U.S. AND AFRICAN/THIRD WORLD SOURCES, PM MANLEY TENDS TO ACCEPT THE AFRICAN/THIRD WORLD PERCEPTION. HE FEELS THAT HIS GOOD JUDGMENT IN DOING SO IS BEING DEMONSTRATED BY REVELATIONS OF DISGRUNTLED FORMER CIA OFFICERS.

8. FROM JAMAICA'S VIEWPOINT THE PROBLEMS ATTENDANT ON CUBA'S SOVIET-BACKED EXCURSIONS IN AFRICA ARE IMPORTANT. IN ADDITION TO CONSIDERING THEIR OWN OVERWHELMING BLACK MAJORITY AND THE RULING PARTY'S IDEOLOGY, THEY HAVE TO CONSIDER THEIR RELATIONS WITH THE U.S. AND THE WESTERN EUROPEANS. PROBABLY FOR THIS REASON ONE SEES ALMOST NOTHING ABOUT GOVERNMENT LEADERS COMMENTING ON AFRICAN ISSUES ALTHOUGH THE LOCAL COMMUNISTS ARE VOCIFEROUS AND THE NON-COMMUNIST OPPOSITION PRESS WISHY-WASHY, ALL OF WHICH REFLECTS CONCERN FOR DOMESTIC REALITIES AND POSSIBLE U.S. REACTION.

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 KINGST 04726 02 OF 02 150237Z

9. PRIME MINISTER MANLEY'S OPEN ADMIRATION FOR CASTRO AND FOR THE CASTRO GOVERNMENT, THE GROWING CUBAN PRESENCE ON THE LOCAL SCENE PLUS MANLEY'S DOMOCRATIC-SOCIALIST IDEOLOGY ARE PROBABLY MORE DIVISIVE OR GIVE GROUNDS FOR MORE SUSPICION AMONG SOME LATIN AMERICAN NATIONS THAN THE GOJ TACIT STANDS ON THE CUBANS IN AFRICA. CUBANS IN AFRICA ARE A MENACE, BUT IN THE CARIBBEAN THEY ARE CONSIDERED A THREAT BY MANY OF JAMAICA'S NEIGHBORS.

10. IN SUM, WHAT INTERESTS THE MANLEY GOVERNMENT IN AFRICA IS THE LIBERATION OF BLACK AFRICANS FROM WHITE MINORITY REGIMES. THIS IS AN ISSUE ON WHICH THEY WOULD AGREE WITH CHURCHILL'S COMMENT ON WHY HE COOPERATED WITH THE SOVIETS IN WORLD WAR II - BUT IN AFRICA THERE IS ONE DEVIL THAT NO ONE CAN COOPERATE WITH IN THE END, AND THAT IS SOUTH AFRICA. JAMAICA UNDER PM MANLEY SEES UNITY WITH THE AFRICANS ON THAT ISSUE AS THE CORNERSTONE OF ITS FOREIGN POLICY IN AFRICA. PEOPLE LINKS THROUGH A COMMON HERITAGE ARE AFTER ALL JAMAICA'S MAIN INTEREST IN AFRICA. WHILE SOME MEMBERS OF THE SMALL AND DWINDLING MIDDLE CLASS MAY CHOOSE NOT TO IDENTIFY WITH THE BLACK AFRICANS, THE OVERWHELMING MAJORITY OF THIS COUNTRY, WHICH IS OVER 90 PERCENT BLACK, DO OR WILL WHEN THEY BECOME AWARE OF

THE ISSUE. IF THEY WANTED TO, MANLEY AND HIS GOVERN-
MENT HAVE HAD AMPLE OPPORTUNITY TO CRITICIZE THE CUBANS
AND SOVIETS IN AFRICA. THAT THEY HAVE REFRAINED IS NOT
DUE TO ANY LACK OF KNOWLEDGE OR INTEREST BUT A DELIBERATE
POLICY CHOICE ANNOUNCED IN THE MOST SUBTLE WAY, BY
PUBLIC SILENCE.
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